



STEM Student Profile



Danny Lo

Computer Science Major

Future Plans:

- Explore opportunities in industry , possibly pursue a PhD

Advice for Students:

- Join MESA, get advice about classes and transferring from the STEM counselor.
- Get involved in opportunities beyond classes—go to the STEM Speaker Series, attend conferences and apply to internships.



Danny Lo chose to major in computer science because of his time in the United States Air Force where he learned to build databases and analyze data.

Lo, born to Hmong parents, grew up with extended family and moved often during his childhood. The biggest reason he joined the military was to earn money for college. He also wanted to do something different than his peers, travel internationally and serve the country. After 10 years in the Air Force, he chose to use his GI bill funding to attend CSM.

Lo initially found college work difficult because he had gaps in his math and academic skills. Tackling his coursework paid off. He was invited by his English professor to become a peer tutor. Training others was a skill he developed

while in the military and he enjoys tutoring fellow students.

Taking pre-calculus while living in a small Airbnb, he didn't have room to study, which was difficult but

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eventually gave him more focus as he spent more time on-campus. He said Professor Pilar was “very open, inviting me and all students to his office hours” and introduced Lo to the MESA program and the power of working with

other students in a math study group. That study group continued working together through several semesters of calculus.

Caring instructors and encouraging faculty are what he calls the best things about CSM. “All of them are super helpful. I've never been turned away for needing help.”

The STEM Speaker Series makes a big difference to Lo because it provides professional perspectives and direction. “CSM professors and the MESA program really provide a lot of different opportunities.”

The inclusiveness of MESA activities like conferences and internships “makes a big difference as far as seeing your path in life.”

Info about a research internship at the Ngan Huang Stanford lab re-

searching Cardiovascular Tissue Engineering came from Olivia, the MESA Director, who encouraged him to apply. He decided to pursue the internship after “talking to her and opening up to other people,” Lo said.

“I was head down, moving forward with blinders on trying to get through as quickly as possible. I wish I had been open to more opportunities when I first started at CSM. The research internship has made me want to slow down and enjoy the scenery.”

After working in the research lab, he is thinking about focusing his computer science degree on computational biology. Lo also wants to add a biology minor. He is looking forward to exploring opportunities in industry and is considering pursuing a PhD.